

REMARKS

Claims 1-8, 10-21, 23-34 and 36-39 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 14 and 27 are amended. No new matter is added. Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

To advance the prosecution of the present application, Applicants request a personal interview with Examiner Vu to discuss the application. The Examiner is requested to contact Applicants' representative to schedule a personal interview before acting on the application.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-4, 6-8, 10, 11, 13-17, 19-21, 23, 24, 26-30, 32-34, 36, 37, 39 and 40 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over U.S. Patent No. 6,968,511 to Robertson et al. ("Robertson"). The cancellation of claim 40 by the Amendment filed August 15, 2007 renders this rejection moot. The rejection of the remaining claims is respectfully traversed.

Claims 1, 14 and 27 each recite that a predetermined distance is at least one of a distance from the closest object in the second object/group to the first object/group, a distance from the center of the second object/group to the first object/group, and a distance from a boundary of the second object/group to the first object/group. These features are already supported in claims 1, 14 and 27 because these claims recite that a determination is made as to whether a first object/group is moved to a location within the predetermined distance of a second object/group.

The Office Action asserts that col. 25, lines 34-41 of Robertson discloses this feature. In particular, the Office Action asserts that Robertson's teaching of a predetermined distance from a cluster indicator to determine a group of objects defines the boundary of the group. The Advisory Action asserts that a range threshold of a cluster indicator configured by the user creates a radius from the object to the cluster and that the radius forms the boundary around the cluster. Applicants agree.

Robertson discloses at col. 25, lines 34-42 that the user can set a predetermined distance to control a proximity threshold as to how close an object must be to become associated with a cluster, and that the threshold can range from zero (e.g., in contact with the cluster indicator) to infinity (e.g., automatic object association with a cluster). As discussed at col. 25, lines 43-51 of Robertson, if the object is within the threshold distance of the cluster (i.e., within the range defined by the user, or the alleged radius of boundary), the object is visually associated with the closest cluster indicator so as to become a member of the cluster represented by such cluster indicator. In other words, Robertson's determination relating to the object's association with a cluster is based on whether the object falls within the range from the cluster indicator of the cluster. That is, if the distance between the object and the cluster indicator is shorter than the range defined by the distance from the cluster indicator (i.e., within the alleged radius of boundary), then the object is associated with the cluster. On the other hand, if the distance between the object and the cluster indicator is greater than the defined range (i.e. outside the alleged radius of boundary), the object is not associated with the cluster.

Robertson does not teach or suggest other ways to determine the association of the object. In particular, Robertson does not teach or suggest determining whether a first object/group is moved to a location within a predetermined distance of a second object/group, the predetermined distance being at least one of a distance from the closest object in the second object/group to the first object/group, a distance from the center of the second object/group to the first object/group, and a distance from a boundary of the second object/group to the first object/group, as recited in claim 1.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that Robertson does not teach or suggest each and every feature of independent claims 1, 14 and 27. Accordingly, claims 1, 14 and 27 are patentable over Robertson.

Claims 2-4, 6-8, 10, 11, 13, 15-17, 19-21, 23, 24, 26, 28-30, 32-34, 36, 37 and 39 are allowable at least for their dependence on allowable base claims, as well as for the additional features they recite. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

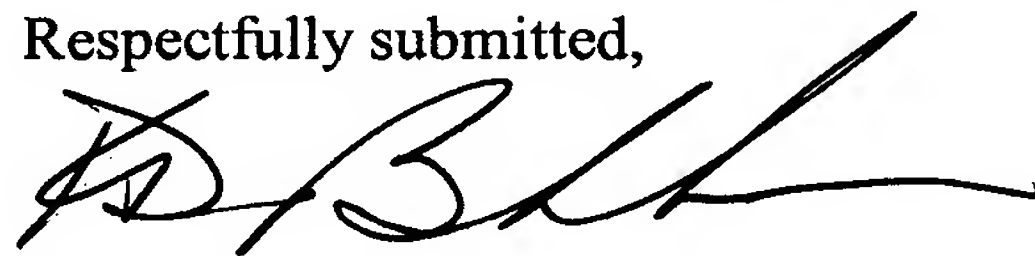
The Office Action rejects claims 5, 12, 18, 25, 31 and 38 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Robertson and U.S. Patent No. 5,371,844 to Andrew et al. (Andrew). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Andrew does not overcome the deficiency of Robertson with respect to claims 1, 14 and 27. Therefore, claims 5, 12, 18, 25, 31 and 38 are patentable over the applied references at least for their dependence on the allowable claims, as well as for the additional features they recite. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of the claims are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



James A. Oliff
Registration No. 27,075

Kirk D. Berkheimer
Registration No. 59,874

JAO:KXH/hms
Date: February 29, 2008

OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC
P.O. Box 320850
Alexandria, Virginia 22320-4850
Telephone: (703) 836-6400

DEPOSIT ACCOUNT USE AUTHORIZATION Please grant any extension necessary for entry; Charge any fee due to our Deposit Account No. 24-0037
--